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The great drama : an appeal
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THE GREAT DRAMA;

AN

APPEAL TO MARYLAND,

BY JOHN P. KENNEDY.

JOHN D. TOY, PRINTER, BALTIMORE.

1861

To the Massachusetts Historical Society
with the respects of John P. Kennedy

15 June

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Box

Massachusetts Historical Society

15 June 1891

THE GREAT DRAMA—AN APPEAL TO MARYLAND.

It is the most deplorable misfortune of our unhappy country, at this moment, that it has no authentic voice to speak its honest, sober judgment on the public affairs. Here we are in Maryland, involved in a dreadful revolution which has already convulsed society to the centre, torn up its prosperity by the roots, sown discord in families, alienated old and familiar friends, and spread consternation through the whole community. It has visited peaceful and thriving households with want, stricken down fortunes acquired by long and patient industry, scattered the small accumulations of humble thrift, and reduced to absolute beggary thousands and thousands of the best and most useful of our working population. These are the ravages of the first act in the Great Drama.

The second act is about to open upon us. The pride and flower of our youth are in arms. Hostile camps are gathering their forces. Wild, ungovernable and savage men are openly and stealthily armed with terrible weapons. Hatreds are cast abroad and sown in fierce hearts. Denunciation and proscription are uttered in under tones and with ominous threats of mischief. Soon we shall hear the clash of arms. What then? Read the wars of the Roses ; read the marches and the raids of Cromwell ; the ravages of the Palatinate ; the fusilades of Lyons. Read, at random, any page that records the rage, the demonism, the hellish passion of civil war, and fancy the sack of cities, the brutal and indiscriminate murder of old and young of either sex, the rape and rapine, the conflagration, the shriek of surprised families, the midnight flight of mothers and children tracking their way with bleeding feet—the mourning, the desolation, the despair which are all painted in such horrid colors in that history—fancy all these pictures converted into the realities of our own experience, and we shall then come to the perception of the second act of this portentous drama.

How does it come to pass that this, our prosperous State of Maryland—this, our beautiful City of Baltimore, is suddenly hurled into the bosom of this commotion? Why is it that Maryland, so remote from the first theatre of revolution, so little concerned in its issues, so reluctant to take sides in this miserable

quarrel—Maryland, happy and peaceful—why is it that she is doomed to stand forward, the first to encounter the sweep of this storm, to bear its continuous brunt, and to give up her substance, her children and her homes, to the alternate ravage of contending factions, until war, wearied with slaughter and exhausted by its own destruction, shall no longer find a victim or a country to punish?

We answer this terrible question truly when we say that Maryland, like her sisters of the Confederacy, is allowed no free and honest expression of her thoughts. It is too painfully obvious that Maryland opinion is surrendered to the control of influences that repress all wise and earnest consideration of the momentous topics that belong to the public welfare. Its key note is derived from the heated utterances of passionate and thoughtless youth, of impulsive women and girls, of infuriated politicians, of all that multitude of excitable, rash, unreasoning persons who fly to conclusions under the impulse of prejudice, desire or interest; and lastly and more significantly, of wily, unscrupulous partisan leaders who are moved by premeditated design to accomplish a selfish party triumph. In the domineering ascendancy of these agencies over the public mind, the quiet, reflective good sense of the community is repressed; the orderly and industrious are kept in the background; the timid are overawed; the weak are silenced, and the credulous are misled.

The whole movement towards secession, even in the States most favorable to it, has been artfully promoted by the fabrications of a false opinion. It has been borne along by a whirlwind of contrived excitement. The passions of the people have been inflamed by exaggerated representations of impending dangers; by skilful exhibition of the idle ravings of mad and wicked fanatics as the settled views of the Government; by startling conjunctures preconcerted by the managers to madden the temper and overwhelm the discretion of the populace, and by provoking outbreak and violence as the topics for frantic appeal to the manhood and patriotism of the State. The unnecessary bombardment of the starving garrison of Sumter was intended to stimulate the reluctant mind of Virginia to secession. The simultaneous seizures of Gosport Navy Yard and of Harper's Ferry were the arranged stimulants to confirm the wavering resolution of that State. The futile and calamitous attempt to resist the passage of the troops through Maryland was but another spur to quicken the speed of secession, by driving the State against its better judgment into rebellion. The secession enterprise, everywhere, has been remarkably characterized by the signs of a conspiracy to give the minority, a command over the majority. It avoids reference to the popular

consent, screens its plans from public criticism by secret sessions, and plies the machinery of passion to rush the people into the abyss of revolution, with the renunciation of all thought and forecast of its consequences.

There is something ungenerous, and even worse, in the advantage which the Seceding States have taken of the wise and patriotic sentiment of the Border States against coercion. When these latter States pledged themselves, in the beginning of the rupture, that they would not sanction any attempt of the Government to coerce the Seceders into submission, it was a pledge that the experiment of secession should be allowed to take its allotted course in peace, with the hope that peace would bring calm judgment into action, and, through its influence, an early return to harmony in the Union. Such a pledge implied a counter-pledge of moderation of counsel and honest confidence in the unbiassed judgment of the people, by the Seceding States. It implied that the good sense of the country should be left free to act, with perfect immunity from artificial excitement, on the whole subject wherever it might be brought into debate. Instead of granting this freedom from agitation to the Border States, the secession party of the South, taking advantage of the promise against coercion, has busily employed itself in provoking collision by assault and spreading panic by alarm, and thus stirring the population of the Border into sudden revolt against the Government. They contrive a necessity for coercion, and then call on the Border States to resist it, in fulfilment of a promise really made to secure peace.

Such are the conditions in which Maryland is now invoked to imbrue her hands in the blood of civil war. It cannot escape observation, that, notwithstanding the large majority of the people of Maryland are now, and ever have been, true and faithful to the Union, and averse to every design to drag them into this ruinous career of revolution, there is an active, intelligent and ardent minority in the State who are bent upon forcing her into the Southern Confederacy; and that although this secession party, now accidentally in possession of the legislative power, finds itself compelled to succumb to the force gathering around it and to temporise with the difficulties it cannot surmount, it still cherishes the purpose of future control, and only lies at lurch waiting the events of the day, to make a new effort to array the State against the Government.

In this condition of things, it is of the profoundest moment that we should invoke the good sense of every patriotic citizen in our Commonwealth to look the danger around us in the face, and before it is too late, to make a united effort to recall our

excited brothers to an honest and sober consideration of our destiny. The men of Maryland, of all parties, are too earnest, too faithful to their duty to themselves and the community in which they live, too honorable, frank and just, knowingly to perpetrate a wrong against the prosperity and happiness of their own homes and kindred—their children and their friends. We accord the fullest honesty of intention even to the rashest and most thoughtless of those who are endeavoring to cast our lot upon the path of disunion. We believe them sincere in thinking that the honor and the welfare of the State demand that we should follow the lead of the bold spirits of the South who have plunged the country into this commotion. Our ingenuous and excitable youth have yielded to what we regard as but a natural impulse, when they bravely rushed to arms to resent what they were taught to think an invasion of our rights. In doing this, they have only demonstrated a noble and mistaken ardor proper to their age and temper, and which now but wants a good cause to win all the applause to which they aspire. They prove to us how much we may depend upon their manhood when the country really requires their arm. But they, like many of their elders, are acting under a delusion.

Maryland has no cause to desert our honored Stars and Stripes. Out of this Union, there is nothing but ruin for her. In the Union, dark as may be the present day, the stout resolve of Maryland to maintain her fealty to the faith of her fathers, will secure to her yet a glorious future.

Let us not fall into the fatal error of thinking that the great interests of the Union are irretrievably lost by the election of an Administration we do not like. At the worst the present predominance of a sectional party in the National Government is but a transient evil. We shall never have another but through the ignoble surrender of the loyal men of the South. Even indeed now, the perpetuation of such a party is an impossibility in the North. The excitement and storm of this day—if it has, for a season, unseated the prosperity of the nation—is worth all its privations, in the good it has already accomplished. It has forever put an end to that pestilent agitation of slavery which, for thirty years, has disturbed the repose of the country; it has forever put an end to sectional Presidents and parties; it has revealed a great truth to this nation—that the Union is above all party, and that peaceful brotherhood is the most beneficent of all our blessings.

Let us bring our minds to a calm estimate of our own duty in this great crisis. There is but one issue before us, Union or Disunion. Every man in Maryland must meet that issue.

Union, on the one side, is loyalty, faith in the traditions of our ancestors, devotion to our historical renown, brave support of our country in its adversity.

Disunion—let us not evade the conclusion—is rebellion, desertion of our duty, dishonor to our flag; voluntary disgrace cast upon the names of the heroes and sages who have made our country illustrious in human annals. It is prompted by the assertion of a principle of anarchy which makes all government impossible; a false dogma which affirms a right of disintegration that may pervade every division of society.

This assumed right of secession is scouted by the judgment of the world. No jurist, no statesman, no man of honest judgment ever affirmed it until, in these later days, it was found to be the convenient pretext for a party design. Every President who has heard it uttered, every Cabinet, every State, every party, at one period or another of our progress, has disowned it. If Washington or Jackson were alive they would account it only as rank rebellion and would so treat it.

We may not shelter ourselves under the plea of revolution. Maryland has no cause for revolution. No man in Maryland can lay his hand upon his heart and say that this Government of ours has ever done him wrong; has ever stinted its bounty to him in the full enjoyment of his life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. We cannot answer to God or man, therefore, for plunging into the great crime of rebellion and treason. Our honor, our faith, our religion will rise up in judgment against us, to convict us of the greatest wickedness man can commit, if, on such a pretence, we lifted a bloody hand against the blessed parent of our political life. Is loyalty nothing? Submission to law nothing? Fidelity to duty nothing? Gentlemen of Maryland, do these things no longer touch your honor? Will you listen to the sordid arguments of gain, to the mean persuasions of interest, to the fear of danger, to the wretched slanders of fanatics, to the dread of that vulgar obloquy which brands you with the name of "Submissionists," to seduce you from your allegiance to the government you have inherited from brave ancestors? Has the cavalier blood become so diluted in your veins that you can for such motives abandon your country in her distress? We mistake you, and have long misunderstood you, if that be the spirit in which you meet this crisis. No, no. Stand by your ancient flag.—Be true to Maryland and keep her where your fathers placed her, and when the time comes redeem your country.

For what does Secession now rear a mutilated banner?

For what cause does it invite us to take up arms?

We hear different answers to these questions.

Some, who think a sectional patriotism to be their greatest duty, answer, "For Southern Rights."

Others, who think worldly profit a higher motive, say, "For Southern trade."

Others again, who seem to be swayed by a kind of fatalism, say, "We have no choice—we must go as Virginia goes."

We have not yet heard the first man on that side say any thing about Maryland rights, Maryland honor, or Maryland independence.

Is it not strange that they forget Maryland has any duty to perform to herself and for herself?

Let us weigh these answers.

What are Southern rights? Everybody speaks of them, nobody defines them. So vague, so misty, so variable, they escape every attempt to grasp them.

Do they comprise, as a chief demand—as many say they do—the right to maintain the institution of slavery unmolested and unimpaired in the States that possess it?

If so, no one now disputes that right. It is affirmed and offered to be made perpetual, even by the late Republican Congress, by the enactment of an irrepealable amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees it forever.

Do they assert the right to take slaves into all territory of the United States south of the Missouri line, as proposed by the Crittenden resolutions?

If that be the demand, that right now exists to its fullest extent, and slavery is at this day by law protected in every foot of territory south of 36.30; and even the three new territories north of that line are open to the admission of slaves without restriction.

Do they mean the right to recover fugitive slaves from the Free States?

If so, all impediment to that right is virtually withdrawn. The Administration affirms a purpose to execute the law, and, in point of fact, the law is now executed with more efficiency and less obstruction than it has been for thirty years past.

Are these the Southern rights for which we are invited to get up revolution and war, and will war be likely to secure them in more full enjoyment than we have them now?

Are there any other Southern rights in dispute? We hear sometimes of a right to free trade and direct taxation; a right to traffic in African slaves; a right to Cuba, to Mexico, to Central America. Is Maryland willing to fight for these?

'Then as to "Southern trade," which has captivated the imagination of some who have fallen into the Secession ranks.

There are many variant and contradictory notions on this point. Carolina hopes to make a New York of Charleston, Georgia claims this bounty for Savannah, Virginia demands it for Norfolk, Louisiana pleases her fancy with the miraculous growth of New Orleans. The visionaries of Maryland quietly smile at all these delusions, perfectly confident that the cornucopia is to be emptied upon Baltimore.

We say nothing of the heart-burnings and jealousies which these various hopes must engender if any one of these dreams are realized to the disappointment of the others. We are only concerned to look at the probable result upon Maryland.

This supposed commercial advantage is founded upon the idea, much commended in the South, of free trade with all the foreign world, and heavy restrictions upon the trade with the United States; a system of commerce built upon complacency on one side and revenge on the other. The Southern Confederacy, it is presumed, will, in the future permanent arrangement of its policy, encumber one-half of its trade—and that its most indispensable and necessary supply—with heavy duties, and leave the other half, which chiefly concerns its luxuries, free. Does any experienced merchant believe this? What will the South gain by laying duties upon the thousand productions of the North that now enter so largely into their common household and agricultural wants? Will they get their farming implements, their machinery, their wooden ware, their fish, their beef, their hay, their ice, their carriages, shoes, hats and clothing—any part of their whole inventory of family requisitions—more cheaply for that? No other country can supply them so well, and the experiment will soon prove that every cent of tax so levied is but a charge upon themselves. When that is proved, and the passion of the day subsides, it is reasoning against all the motives of human conduct to suppose that a merely vindictive restriction will be allowed to exist. The North would soon grow to be in the same category to the South with all the rest of the world—in war, enemies, in peace, friends; and the free trade system, if practicable at all, will be extended equally to all within the range of Southern commerce.

There are some who think these discriminations will be made with a view to the establishment of large manufacturing interests in the South. But to this there is the obvious reply, that no manufacturing system ever was built up in companionship with free trade; and the Southern Constitution has already put a veto

upon the attempt by a specific prohibition of all power to protect any domestic industry.

The Northern manufactures are sufficiently established and prosperous to compete with the world in free trade, and they will always continue to find a Southern market from their exact adaptation to Southern wants. But the manufactures of Maryland, in great part, are precisely those which would wither and perish under the free trade policy. We could supply no iron from our mines, no iron fabrics from our workshops. Our great steam enginery, our rail road apparatus, our heavy works of the foundry, our cast and rolled metal, could never hold their own in the presence of free importations from England. It will occur to any one conversant with our workshops, that much of our most important industry here in Baltimore, and throughout the State, would be compelled to yield under the pressure of European rivalry.

Again, free trade implies direct taxation to raise revenue for the support of government. A glance at this will supply another element for the consideration of those who fancy that Maryland is to prosper in a Southern Confederacy.

The expenses of the new government are inevitably to be cast upon a higher estimate than we have ever witnessed in our heretofore harmonious Union. Large armies and navies are to be provided as the necessary apparatus of government. Fifty millions a year will not be an unfamiliar experience to the Southern financier. If that amount is to be levied upon some nine million of free population, which about represent the present number of the whole of the Southern States, it affords a ratio of more than five dollars a head. If but thirty millions be the expenditure, it will be over three dollars a head. Maryland contains near six hundred and fifty thousand free persons, and thus we estimate her annual share of the tax at over three millions per annum, on a fifty million expenditure, and on the supposition of thirty millions, something near two millions per annum. Our present State tax is about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The addition to this, for the support of the Confederate Government, will, on the first supposed rate of expenditure, be twelve, on the other, eight times the present tax. I give these figures as a formula of calculation which any one may apply to his own estimate of the probable expenditure of the new government, if its revenues are to be supplied by direct taxation.

How the trade and industry of Maryland may reconcile themselves to such a system, I leave those to judge who are best acquainted with the tax bills our present necessities impose upon us.

If it should be discovered, as I have no doubt it will be, after

some sore and short experience, that this free trade fancy is but an expensive delusion, and that the old, long tried, universal and inevitable system of duties, known to and practised by all nations, as the most commendable system of national support, must be substituted by the Confederate States, what then will be the condition of their commerce? It will then be found that the revolution has been a vain work. The bubble will have burst, and the experimenters, after having turned the whole nation back a quarter of a century in its career—having ruined a generation, subverted more capital than would suffice to purchase every slave in the nation, accumulated a debt impossible to be paid, and spread repudiation and bankruptcy over a whole circle of States—happy, if to these evils it has not added the clothing of every household in mourning—the experimenters will then find themselves vainly endeavoring to restore trade to the same relations and arrangement in which it was at the fatal moment when they initiated their new career. All that will then have been achieved will be the creation of a double set of political dignitaries, and the distribution of a double supply of loaves and fishes to the patriots of the ferment.

A tariff of duties for revenue once adopted, it then becomes the plain policy of the United States of the old Confederacy to enact the same rates, and commerce will immediately oscillate back to the track and custom of its old career.

Even if it should not be drawn again into that current, what has Baltimore to hope for? Will she import for the South, from the head of the Chesapeake, whilst Norfolk lies on the margin of the sea at its mouth, with an admirable harbor, and with all the means of Western and Southern distribution by rail roads that penetrate to the Mississippi and Ohio? Do old and sagacious merchants of Baltimore allow this delusion to seize their minds? Boys may prate about such things, but surely men of sense will repeat no such absurdity. But, we have heard it said, if Maryland be not a member of the Southern Confederacy, Virginia, in time of war, may close all access to the Chesapeake against us. That is true. But if Maryland should be a member of that Confederacy, then the North, in time of war, may also shut up the Chesapeake against us; and not only that, but may also shut up our Western and Northern Rail Roads. It may deny us the Ohio river; it may deny us access to Philadelphia, to New York—utterly obliterate not only our trade, but cut off our provisions. In the other case, Virginia could not do that, nor even impede our transit on the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road, as long as Western Virginia shall stand our friend, as assuredly it will if we are true to ourselves.

The last argument popularly used in favor of the secession of Maryland, is that which asserts a necessity that compels us "to go as Virginia goes."

It is supposed that the recent attempted secession of Virginia leaves us no choice. It is declared that our sympathies as well as our interests are with Virginia; in fact, that our fate is in her hands. If this were true, it would have been but a becoming decorum in Virginia to have invited us into her counsels, or, at least, to have warned us of the complications she was preparing for us. As it is, she has led us blindfold to the verge of the precipice, and those of our own fellow-citizens who renounce for us all freedom of opinion on our own destiny, tell us we have no choice but to take the leap.

We deny that Maryland is so bound up in the fortunes of Virginia. We regard the interest of that State to be quite as dependent upon the favor of Maryland as Maryland is upon her. In all that denotes vigor, growth of power, and capacity for great enterprise, Maryland is ahead of Virginia. Whilst our population in the last decade has increased twenty-five per cent., that of Virginia has not advanced over twelve. What we have accomplished in public works and in the extension of commercial activity bears a still more favorable comparison in the estimate of the resources of the two States. Let us not so derogate from the influence and capability of our own State as to surrender our independence to the control of politicians who have as yet shown so little capacity in governing their own. In truth, we might, with good reason, reverse the affirmation of the argument we are considering, and say that Virginia should look to Maryland, and should adapt her policy, on this question of separation, to ours. She should at least, consult the other Border States, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, as well as Maryland, and shape her course in conformity with their common views.

When we speak of Virginia, there is another most significant question to be considered. To what portion of Virginia are we to attach our fortunes? Is it to that waning Eastern section which at present holds the political power over the State—that section whose population, scattered over the region visited by the tide, is gradually declining in numbers and losing its ascendancy in the public affairs, and whose power at this day is founded rather upon the traditions of the past than upon any inherent capacity to govern? or is it to that vigorous and healthful Western Virginia upon whom nature has lavished her bounty in the provision of all the elements of a prosperous and powerful community?

Virginia is divided into two distinct sections, altogether different in physical quality and in moral character. The one teems

with a redundant slave population, of which the excess is kept down by a continual drain of emigration to the South. Its habits are Southern, its affinities are for the South. These are not less nourished by the character of its labor than by the temper of its leading men—talented and impulsive and educated in strong sympathy with the Secession States.

The other division includes the land of the mountaineer—a land of mineral wealth, of rapid streams, of fertile pastures, of bracing atmosphere, where the people have little dependence on slave labor, and who see in the resources of the soil and climate an invitation to all the varied industry of populous and thriving States.

We of Maryland are solicited to associate ourselves with the first of these divisions. It is said our natural relationship is with them.

We certainly have had abundant reason, in the past to know that the governing power of Virginia does not reciprocate the favor of this relationship. Maryland has no more persistent and steady antagonism to her policy to contend against than she has ever found in the domination of this low country influence. Let those who have had the management of our public works, our rail road and canal, say what difficulties they have had to encounter in the hostility of Virginia to the grant of the smallest privilege or aid from that State; and let them describe how all solicitations have been refused until the friendly intercession of the Western counties, often baffled, has at last by peremptory demand secured us the grace of being permitted to expend millions of Maryland capital upon Virginia soil.

The true friends and allies of our policy are in the West. At this moment that region is making its protest against secession. It is a matter of the deepest moment that we should wisely appreciate this fact. It is not for us now to discuss the probable contingencies of the future which may spring out of the state of opinion in the Western counties, but we should not blindly adopt a policy in the present juncture which may forever alienate them from the interest which makes them the guardians and protectors of our road and the ministers to our trade.

The singular change of opinion which has recently brought Virginia into secession is one of the inexplicable things of the day. Time may perhaps prove it to be a forced assent obtained by the arts which have, everywhere in the seceding States, more or less subdued and coerced public opinion. At present the world can only perceive that "the Mother of States," in spite of her protestations of independence, in spite of the contumely and insult heaped upon her, has succumbed to the dictation of Carolina—has been "dragged" into revolution and compelled to an act of sub-

mission, by which she has surrendered her lofty position as a mediator in the national quarrel and sunk into a secondary power in the new Confederacy. She is the first of the Border States that has given way. Let Maryland be the last to follow her example.

We cannot forget that the Southern Confederacy has hitherto repudiated all connection with the Border States; that they were contemptuously repelled as unworthy of consultation. It is only now, when a severe experience has demonstrated the necessity of friends able both to pay and to fight, that these States are approached with flattering appeals to take a stand in the very front of war and bear the brunt of its worst assaults. We who never felt or professed any respect for their cause, who, indeed, accuse them of having produced all the difficulties and disgraces which have resulted from the recent Presidential Election, are now counselled to patient submission to this coercion, and even to embrace it with thankful avidity as an honorable duty. Virginia has placed herself at the head of the Submissionists, and men whom we have esteemed, here in Maryland, for their manhood, tell us we have no choice but to follow her example!

I draw this view of our condition to a close by repeating my clear conviction that the interest and safety of Maryland coincide with her loyalty to the Union, that disunion is ruin to her.

Let us not be moved by the taunt that we are aiding the Republican cause and vindicating the administration of Mr. Lincoln. That is but the party vituperation of those who seek to frighten us by false clamor into an abandonment of our opposition to their own party schemes. We deplore the unfortunate ascendancy of the Republican party; we censure the policy of the Administration. We may claim much more respect for our sincerity in this than our opponents are entitled to ask, since it is only by their machinations that the Republican party has won its ascendancy, and by their desertion of their posts and their duty in Congress, that Mr. Lincoln's administration has obtained any power to involve the country in the present commotion. In the stage at which the public embarrassments have now arrived, all the questions of the late canvass have disappeared. The country is aroused to the protection of the Union, to the defence of our system of government. The men who were most earnest in opposing the election of Mr. Lincoln throughout the whole North and West are united into a compact body, in a unanimous determination to vindicate the right of the people to the Union bequeathed to them by their fathers. Large numbers in the South, whose voices are suppressed by the despotism of party rule, have the same sentiment deeply impressed upon their hearts. The con-

servative Northern men who have come so sternly and with such alacrity to this duty of defence—a majority of the Northern people—will visit with indignant disgust the fanatical agitators of the slavery question, whose wicked pertinacity has raised this storm in the nation, and we shall hear no more of the wretched cant of the sin of slavery in the South. That abuse of the peace of the nation will be purged away by this commotion, if no other good result from it.

On one side of us is a united nation of nineteen millions of people. On the other, a divided population of nine millions. We stand between them. If we remain true to the Union, we shall have protection and peace, and hereafter an easy settlement of all our complaints. If we desert the Union, we shall be driven into a Confederacy which has but little sympathy with our interests, and less power to protect us against the ravage of the frequent wars which must inevitably arise between the two sections.

The Southern Confederacy is essentially weak in the basis of its construction. It is founded on a principle which must lead to the ever recurring dangers of new secessions and the exhibition of a worse than Mexican anarchy. It may witness *pronunciamientos* upon every discontent, and the strife of parties ending in further disintegration. If the Border States go into that Confederacy, the opposition of material interests will soon develop the utter want of capacity in the new government to secure its cohesion.

Maryland, under any circumstances of peace or war, must soon become a Free State, and she will then be found to be wholly ungenial to the principle upon which the Southern Confederacy is established. It would, therefore, not be long before she would be compelled to retire from the alliance and become a suppliant for shelter under the wing of that old Union which in a rash moment she had abandoned.

If she remain where she is, her example may influence the course of the other Border States which now are drawn to the verge of secession, and with them may happily bring about a restoration of the whole Union. Four years hence, this Administration will give place to another. A popular, conservative President then elected will restore confidence to the whole country. The Union sentiment of the South will make itself heard in the remotest sections of the secession, and disenthralled from the domination that now forbids it to speak, it will once more assert its attachment to the Stars and Stripes.

Let the true voice of our State now be heard on these questions. The Legislature now in session has one solemn duty to perform. It is to give the State an opportunity to declare its

wish. Much has been said about the desire of Maryland to fall into the ranks of the Seceding States. There has been a great clamor for a Convention by those who have been anxious for Secession. Let the Legislature now put the question to the people—Do you want a Convention, with power to declare Maryland out of the Union?

Put that question, and we shall then know what part Maryland will take in the Great Drama.

JOHN P. KENNEDY.

BALTIMORE, *May 9, 1861.*

